

Pre-Visit Activity:

Bird Chorus

Objectives: Students identify the natural timing for bird species to sing. The students will also describe the reasons behind the songs and the seasons in which they are heard.

Background: Birds have many sounds that they make. They sing in the spring to attract mates. They use a “call” to defend their territory or to warn of danger. Songs are unique and each species has its own song. Songs will be heard at different times because each species mates at a different time since they have different food needs.

Procedure: Make two copies of the list below and cut them apart so you have at least two slips of paper for each bird sound. Discuss with the class the purpose of bird songs and the timing of those songs. Give each student a bird sound making sure that you have “pairs” of birds (you may need to use only 4 or 5 bird sounds.). Have the students keep the identity of their bird a secret. At the start of the activity, have the students begin to sing or say their "song". Each student should try to find the other person singing the same song.

After a cacophony of noise, stop the activity and have the pairs identify themselves and discuss how they found their “mate”. Was it easy or hard? Are there any birds that did not find a “mate”? Why might that have happened? Would it happen in the “real” world? Discuss why different species sing different songs? Why do they think that the birds sing during the day and not the night? Why do birds sing in the spring and not some other season? Why sing at all? Have the students research their bird and find out when they sing? Do they migrate? Why?

1. Robin: "cheerio, cheery me, cheery me"
2. Ovenbird: "teacher-teacher-teacher"
3. White-throated sparrow: "poor sam peabody-peabody-peabody"
4. Eastern meadowlark: "sweet spring is here"
5. Redwinged blackbird: "konk-la-ree"
6. Yellow throat: "witchity-witchity"
7. Blackcapped chickadee: "chick-a-dee-dee-dee"
8. Red-eyed vireo: "going up - coming down"
9. Goldfinch: "potato chip - potato chip"
10. Phoebe: "feebe - feebe"
11. White-breasted nuthatch: "yank - yank"



12. Crow: “caw, caw, caw”
13. Barred Owl: “who cooks for you, who cooks for you”
14. Mallard duck: “quack, quack, quack”
15. Yellow warbler: "sweet sweet SWEET I am so SWEET"
16. Mourning dove: “whooooooooo-who-who-who”